

Franco and Control Of Spain

Madrid surrendered in March 1939 this left Franco in control of Spain but needing to establish his government and power – **Consolidate**.

Terror

Franco developed a reputation as a cruel and vindictive military leader. It is estimated that an estimated 200,000 political prisoners died as a result of starvation, overwork and executions. The persecution of political opponents continued until 1944 when a number of amnesties and pardons were granted.

During the War and Franco's victory 500,000 people also went into exile – most into France.

Neutrality

Franco declared that Spain was Neutral in WW2, though volunteers did fight with Germany against Russia. (Spanish Blue Division). In October 1943, Franco recalled the Spanish Blue Division from the Soviet Union. Convinced that the Axis powers would be defeated, Franco now began to openly support the Allies in the war with Germany.

After WW2 Spain was not given help by the USA to rebuild however the attitude gradually changed.

Franco's strong anti-Communism made him popular with the United States and in 1950 Spain was allowed to join the United Nations. In 1953 Franco signed an agreement that enabled the United States to establish four air and naval bases in Spain. In return the National Atlantic Treaty Organization protected Franco's regime from foreign invasion.

However Europe was slower to forget and Spain was left out of the European Economic Community until after Franco's death. Franco was vulnerable as the only Fascist Dictator remaining in Europe. He was isolated and aimed to follow a policy of **Self Sufficiency**.

Use of Referendum

After the war Franco came under considerable pressure to restore the monarchy. In 1947 Franco announced a referendum to establish his position. The vote confirmed him as lifetime regent. The following year, Juan Carlos, the future king, began his education at the age of ten under Franco's supervision.

Support of the Church

In 1953 the Vatican confirmed the Church's recognition of Franco's power by granting him the right to the final choice of a bishop from a list of several candidates proposed by the pope.